

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 H-01
/052 W

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R 251800Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4715
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 02846

JERUSALEM FOR USDEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG IS
SUBJECT: ANTI-SEMITISM IN EGYPTIAN PRESS

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS HAVE URGED GOE ESCHEW
LANGUAGE WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS ANTI-SEMITIC.
WE HAVE GONE OVER LAST TWO WEEKS' PRESS AND HAVE BEEN
UNABLE DETECT PATTERN DEMONSTRATING PRESS ENGAGED IN
ANTI-SEMITIC CAMPAIGN EITHER UNDER GOE DIRECTION OR ON
ITS OWN. OBJECTIONABLE CHARACTERIZATIONS WHICH HAVE
APPEARED REFLECT GENUINE EGYPTIAN FRUSTRATION WITH COURSE
OF PEACE PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE THE APPEARANCE LAST WEEK OF MUSTAPHA AMIN'S
"SHYLOCK" CALUMNIATION, AMBASSADOR HAS SPOKEN TO
SENIOR GOE OFFICIALS URGING THEM TO ESCHEW LANGUAGE THAT
SMACKS OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN THEIR CRITICISMS OF ISRAELI
POLICY. HE HAS RAISED THIS SUBJECT SEPARATELY WITH VP
MUBARAK, PRIMIN MAMDUH SALEM, FONMIN KAMEL, PEOPLES
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ASSEMBLY SPEAKER SAYED MAREI AND MININFO EL SAWI AS WELL
AS WITH VARIOUS NEWSMEN. (AMBASSADOR ALSO MENTIONED
IT TODAY TO PRESIDENT SADAT--SEPTTEL.) ON AMBASSADOR'S
INSTRUCTIONS, EMBOFFS HAVE ALSO MADE THIS POINT TO
EGYPTIAN EDITORS AND OTHERS. ALL THESE OFFICIALS TOOK
THE POINT AND BOTH VP MUBARAK AND PRIMIN SALEM UNDERTOOK
ADVISE THE PRESS TO AVOID ANTI-SEMITIC SLURS IN CRITI-

CIZING ISRAELI POLICIES.

2. MOUSSE SABRI, CHIEF EDITOR OF AKHBAR AL-YOM, SUGGESTED TO PAO JAN 24 THAT PRESS NOW UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRESIDENCY TO REFRAIN FROM PERSONAL ATTACKS ON BEGIN AND FROM ARTICLES WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED ANTI-JEWISH. (AKHBAR, EARLIER, CARRIED MUSTAPHA AMIN'S ARTICLE COMPARING BEGIN TO SHYLOCK, TO WHICH ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER TOOK SUCH EXCEPTION.) SABRI UNDERSTOOD ALL EDITORS RECEIVED SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONS.

3. DESPITE SABRI'S "GUIDELINES", AKHBAR JAN 25 EDITORIAL DEPICTED BEGIN AS MAN "EXPOSING HIMSELF TO THE WORLD AS INDIVIDUAL LIVING ACCORDING TO WORN-OUT IDEAS AND PREJUDICES . . . EGYPT OFFERED BEGIN PEACE AND HE RESPONDED WITH HATRED AND RANCOR." THIS OFFERED TO REFUTE BEGIN'S CHARGE OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN EGYPTIAN PRESS: AN IMPOSSIBILITY, AKHBAR CLAIMED, SINCE ARABS THEMSELVES SEMITES AND EGYPT WELL KNOWN FOR RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE.

4. EMBASSY HAS GONE OVER LAST TWO WEEKS' EGYPTIAN PRESS IN EFFORT ASCERTAIN WHETHER, IN FACT, THERE HAS BEEN PATTERN OF COMMENTARY WHICH COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS "ANTI-SEMITIC CAMPAIGN". ON BALANCE, EVIDENCE INDICATES THIS IS NOT THE CASE ALTHOUGH IN PAST 15 DAYS THERE HAVE BEEN NUMBER OF CHARACTERIZATIONS, PARTICULARLY OF

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BEGIN, TO WHICH ISRAELIS UNDOUBTEDLY TAKE EXCEPTION. EXAMPLES: ON JAN 10, AKHBAR CLAIMED BEGIN HAD LOST SELF-CONTROL, HAD BECOME FULL OF CONTRADICTIONS, AND WAS MAKING STATEMENTS TO SATISFY DOMESTIC POLITICAL GROUPS. SAME PAPER, JAN 11, OPINED PROBLEM WITH ISRAELI MENTALITY IS INABILITY RID ITSELF OF OBSESSION OF EXPANSION. EGYPT WELCOMES JEWS AND RESPECTS THEIR RIGHT EXERCISE RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FREEDOM. HOWEVER, THIS RIGHT BASICALLY DIFFERENT FROM ISRAELI RIGHT ESTABLISH SETTLEMENTS ON EGYPTIAN LAND.

5. GUMHURIYYA, JAN 14, ALSO TOOK ISSUE WITH ISRAELI MENTALITY "WHICH HAS BEEN FOUNDED MAINLY ON WAR AND FIGHTING." PAPER CLAIMED (AT SOME UNSPECIFIED PERIOD IN PAST) BEGIN STATED "I FIGHT, THEN I EXIST," CONCLUDING THIS MENTALITY CAN NOT QUICKLY ACCEPT PEACE OPTION.

6. AHARAM JOINED CHORUS ON JAN 17, CLAIMING BEGIN'S LATEST STATEMENTS AND STANCES INDICATE RETURN OF "OLD ISRAELI MENTALITY." BEGIN SEEKING THE IMPOSSIBLE: LAND, SECURITY AND PEACE--ALL SIMULTANEOUSLY.

7. MORE RECENT EDITORIALS HAVE DEPICTED BEGIN AS OBSESSED BY ILLUSIONS, BEHAVING AS LEADER TERRORIST GANG, IMAGINING HIMSELF "SAMSON", AND FUNCTIONING AS JEWISH USURPER. PAPERS HAVE QUESTIONED HIS DESIRE FOR PEACE, CLAIMING ONLY EXISTING TENSIONS KEEP ZIONISM--TO WHICH BEGIN CLEARLY COMMITTED--ALIVE.

8. COMMENT: ABOVE CHARACTERIZATIONS REFLECT GENUINE EGYPTIAN FRUSTRATION WITH COURSE OF PEACE PROCESS, PAR-

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
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P 251800Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 02846

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FIRST LINE OF TEXT)

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TICULARLY WITH BEGIN'S INSISTENCE ON MAINTAINING SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI. THIS INSISTENCE CAME AS GREAT SHOCK, NOT JUST TO SADAT, BUT TO VAST MAJORITY OF EGYPTIANS. THIS PRESS CRITICISM IS DIRECTED AT BEGIN PERSONALLY AND AT RETURN OF "OLD ISRAELI ARROGANCE" A LA SADAT IN JAN 20 PRESS CONFERENCE. WHILE SOME LOADED WORDS SUCH AS SHYLOCK WERE USED BY INDIVIDUAL EDITORS, WE DO NOT BELIEVE PRESS ENGAGED IN ANTI-SEMITIC CAMPAIGN, EITHER UNDER GOE DIRECTION OR ON ITS OWN. EILTS

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